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THE CHARACTER AND BLESSEDNESS OF THOSE WHO DIE IN THE LORD;

TWO SERMONS

PREACHED IN

LADY GLENORCHY'S CHAPEL, EDINBURGH,

ON THE FORENOON AND AFTERNOON OF SABBATH,
MARCH 19, 1837,

AFTER THE INTERMENT OF THE LATE

THOMAS SNELL JONES, D. D.

MINISTER OF SAID CHAPEL.

BY

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SERMON.

REVELATION xiv. 13. *And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.*"

THE book of Revelation presents us with a mystic painting of the faith, the zeal, the persecutions, and the ultimate triumph of the church of God over all her enemies. It embraces a wide range both of time and of events; extending its history to countries far removed from each other; and reaching from an early period of the Christian era, till the final consummation of all things. In the chapter preceding my text, we have an awful yet impressive description of the blasphemy and wickedness of the Romish Church; and of the fearful doom which Heaven in wisdom, in justice, and even in mercy, will ere long inflict upon her. But before the sentence of her condemnation is executed, and the cry uttered, "Babylon, that great city, is fallen, is fallen;" we find her employed in persecuting even unto death, the devoted and intrepid followers of the Lamb of God. While their faith and patience are extolled by the Divine Spirit, and held forth, as patterns to believers in every succeed-

ing age, and pledges of the ultimate triumph of Divine truth; yet such was the misery which they endured, that the language of Solomon might well be applied to their condition, "that better are the dead that are already dead, than the living that are yet alive." The one moved in a scene of usefulness and activity, but of deep anxiety and heart-rending sorrow; the other "rested from their labours, were fol- "lowed by their works," and admitted into the immediate presence of their Lord and Saviour.

It is interesting and instructive at all times to reflect, while the wise and good are removed from the midst of us, and while we mourn their loss, not only on our own account, but also for the sake of the church of the living God,—that they are taken from evil to come; and having remained steadfast in the path of duty, and zealous in promoting the interests of their Redeemer's kingdom, now wear the palm of victory, and are adorned with that crown of glory that fadeth not away. I trust, my brethren, it will prove no uninteresting nor unprofitable subject of meditation, to direct your attention, in the first place,

1st, To the meaning of the expression employed in my text, "to die in the Lord."

2dly, And secondly, to the happiness reserved for those whose life is closed in so desirable a condition: "They rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

I. In the *first place*, 'to die in the Lord,' is to die in the exercise of a firm and lively faith in Jesus Christ. Faith in Christ stimulated the Apostles and

martyrs in their labours of holy zeal to extend the triumphs of the Redeemer's kingdom from pole to pole; and taught them "not to consider their own lives dear to themselves, that so they might finish their course with joy, and the ministry which they had received of the Lord to testify the gospel of the grace of God." It was this which enabled them, in a dark and dreary dungeon, to sing the songs of Zion, and to pour forth the accents of thankfulness and joy: It was this which rendered them firm and undaunted when doomed to endure the most excruciating tortures which malice could invent, or cruelty inflict: And it was this which inspired them with a holy calm when death was presented before them in its most appalling forms. They looked to Jesus, not merely as the Deliverer of mankind in general, but as the Redeemer upon whom *their* own sins were laid, and who had borne *them* for ever away. They had washed in the fountain of his blood; they were clothed in the spotless garment of his righteousness; they received from his hand new supplies of wisdom, grace and strength; He was all their salvation and all their desire. Theirs was not that cold and inoperative faith which is merely the result of the prejudices of education, unattended with serious enquiry and deliberate investigation. It was not a mere defence of the outworks of Christianity while the citadel itself was neglected or betrayed—a partial admission of the doctrines of the Gospel, while those great and leading peculiarities which distinguish it from every other system of morals, were either cast into the shade, or utterly denied. No; it was a faith large and comprehensive, which receiv-

ed Christ in all his characters and offices; and rested upon him alone as he is freely offered to us in the Gospel. This is the faith, not of the apostles and martyrs *alone*, but of all who are brought into a state of union with the great Redeemer of a fallen world. Of every good man it may be said, that he realizes to his mind things invisible; and that "he walks by faith, and not by sight."

As the lamp of life begins to burn dark and dim, the Sun of Righteousness shines with a brighter effulgence upon his soul; and the doctrines of the gospel present themselves before him with increased vividness and power. Often he is permitted to bear his dying testimony to the truth and excellence of that religion which has been the joy of his heart, and the guide of his life. And even were this not the case, the hallowed influence which it communicates to his temper, dispositions, and habits, affords to all a confirmation of its divine efficacy, and a memorial the most solemn and impressive that he who lived, has also died, in the faith of the Gospel.

2*d*, And this leads me to observe in the second place, that to die in the Lord, is to die in a state of conformity to the character and image of the blessed Jesus. This is the invariable result of faith in Christ. We may indeed acquire a knowledge of divine truth, while faith has never been ingrafted into our hearts. We may receive a part of the gospel message, and yet the corruption which cleaves to our nature may in a great measure remain unsubdued; for it is the *entire* submission of the understanding and heart to the will of God which alone is able to renovate the character of man. The *measure* and *degree* of our

faith also has a powerful influence upon the *extent* of our attainments in the divine life. But nothing can be of higher importance than always to bear in mind, that the faith which justifies, is a faith which also sanctifies; and that every doctrine which is revealed by the great Redeemer, is calculated to elevate the believer not only in the scale of intellectual but also of moral existence. Obedience is the touch-stone of Christian sincerity; the only unequivocal evidence of the reality of our faith.—Before we can die in the Lord, our souls must have been weaned from the love and dominion of sin; Jehovah must reign unrivalled in our hearts; his law must be our delight; evil thoughts must be repelled; temptations resisted; besetting sins mortified; criminal appetites and passions subdued; Christian graces and virtues cultivated; and our lives dedicated to the high and holy ends for which existence was bestowed. The bodily powers of a good man may lose their wonted vigour; his intellectual faculties may gradually decay; but, as his mortal pilgrimage hastens to a close, he increases in humility, in meekness, in submission, in dependence on the power and grace of his Saviour and Sanctifier, and in that spiritual mindedness which seems already to have associated him with the inhabitants of the celestial world into which he is soon to enter. How strikingly was this manifested in the lives of the primitive followers of Jesus. While our Lord tabernacled upon earth, many instances of weakness, prejudice and, error are presented to our view in the character of his apostles. After his ascension to heaven, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, we are lost in admiration of the

personal virtues they exhibit; of their unwearied labours in the cause of truth and righteousness, their heroic intrepidity of mind, and their patient endurance of suffering and death for the sake of the Master whom they served. And have not some of us been privileged to behold the gradual progress of the saint, as he advances in life, in the ways of godliness. His language may have lost a portion of its wonted liveliness and animation, and his feelings may in some degree be blunted by age; but every attentive observer may perceive that his heart is becoming more and more weaned from earth; his soul ascending to his God; and his character governed by principles and views which extend to the mighty regions of eternity. And this reminds us in the

Third place, That to die in the Lord is to die in the hope of the gospel. Hope is one of the most powerful springs of human action; the enlivener of our joys, the soother of our woes. It is a striking picture which St. Paul gives us of the condition of an unregenerated man, that he is not only "without God," but also "without hope in the world." He is not indeed entirely divested of hope, but it reaches not beyond the present state of things. It is centred in some earthly good which he wishes to attain; but it shrinks from the thought of a future state of being. It may ardently desire to be exempted from the misery of hell; but it has no appetency for the purity and bliss of heaven. His tastes and desires are of an infinitely lower grade. They belong to the nature of the worm that grovels in the dust, and not to that of the seraph who delights to encircle the throne of the Most High, and to serve him

day and night in his holy temple. No sooner is the life of God infused into the soul of man than he feels that the husks of created enjoyment can never satisfy the boundless wishes of a heaven-born and immortal mind. He may at times cleave with too eager a grasp to earth, and may deeply feel his need of the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit to purify and elevate his affections. But grace descends from above. It subordinates the influence of sense, to the power of faith; it draws forth the affections of the soul to its God and Redeemer; and enables the believer while he lives in this world to live above it, and to look beyond it. And when the pins of the tabernacle begin to loosen, when the strength is weakened, when the mental powers decay, and earthly desire has almost failed, the dying saint anticipates with unmingled delight his admission to the joys of immortality, his entrance into his Father's house, and the happiness which awaits him when "Time itself shall be no longer."

II. A voice from heaven has declared, and it is confirmed by the testimony of the blessed Spirit, that "he shall rest from his labours, and his works shall "follow him." It has generally been supposed by Commentators on the Holy Scriptures, that the words of my text have a special reference to those pious and holy men who, at the period of the Reformation, vindicated the purity and simplicity of the Christian Faith from the false doctrines and heresies of the Romish church. They were deeply imbued with the mind that was in Christ. They had learned implicitly to believe and cordially to receive those

doctrines which humble the pride of man, while they exalt the grace of God. The impiety, the pomp, the worldly mindedness with which they were surrounded, filled their souls with holy indignation. The word of truth had literally become a sealed book; a weak and erring mortal arrogated to himself the power which pertains to the Omnipotent alone; relics, and prayers to saints were substituted for the atoning blood of Jesus, and the regenerating influence of the Holy Ghost; and the most superstitious observances had usurped the place of that inward piety, which has its seat in the heart, and which regulates and governs the varied actions of the life. No privation seemed too great, no exertion too arduous, no sufferings too severe, to rescue their fellow creatures from an ignorance so degrading,—a tyranny so debasing,—a danger so vast and imminent to their highest, their eternal interest. I will not attempt to give you the faintest outline of the unwearied labours and the incessant hardships and persecutions which marked the lives of the reformers of our faith. They dreaded not to appear in the presence of princes and nobles, to bear their testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus. They shrunk not from the torture or the scaffold; and they feared not to have their limbs torn to pieces by the wild beasts of the forest. But still they were not divested of the feelings that pertain to the nature of man. Pain, and degradation, and death, in themselves, presented no charms to them more than to other men,—they were as abhorrent to their bodily and mental constitution; but they knew that they suffered in the best of causes. They anticipated the time when

" they should rest from their labours." In that world into which they were soon to enter, the voice of the oppressor is never heard, the sword of the tyrant has lost its power, and persecution is unknown. The blood of the martyred saint may indeed cry for vengeance, but his soul reposes in peace and safety. It finds rest, pure and complete, in the love and enjoyment of its God.

The Christian is exposed to harassing cares, and frequent anxiety and distress, in the course of his journey through the wilderness of life. I speak not now of the thorn and the thistle which grow up on every hand; of the sweat of his brow with which he is often called to earn his bread; of the hardships of poverty; of the agonies of pain; of the disappointment that springs from unrequited affection, and the heart-rending sorrows which arise from the disruption of the purest and tenderest ties which bind us to earth. Every human being experiences a desire to be released from these calamities; and the whole rational creation may be represented as groaning under them, and ardently longing for deliverance from their baneful influence.

But there are labours which peculiarly belong to redeemed and sanctified man; and from which he is at times rewarded with no ordinary portion of pleasure. Yet even these works of faith and love are not always crowned with success—they often prove abortive. And the higher the measure of zeal which has been called into exercise, the greater is the disappointment which must arise from failure. The liberal mind of the follower of Jesus may form the scheme of beneficence, but it is perhaps thwarted by the sel-

fishness of those with whom he is associated; or their envy and jealousy prevent them from that hearty co-operation without which it cannot be carried into execution. He may long to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, and to provide a home for the children of destitution; but he possesses not the means of gratifying the ardent wishes of his heart, and he is destined to mourn over a misery which he is utterly unable to relieve. He strives with unwearied earnestness to awaken the hardened sinner to a sense of his guilt and wretchedness, to reclaim the backslider, to guide the young into the paths of peace, to repress the torrent of abounding iniquity, and to spread far and wide the glories of the Redeemer's name; but he is soon taught by dire experience that the heart of man is harder than the adamant, and often remains utterly inaccessible to the force of argument or the power of persuasion—and even when he trusts that he has been the humble yet willing instrument of leading a fellow-creature to his God, his hopes are frequently frustrated, and he sees him returning again with increased avidity to the ways of sin. The command of God, the love of Christ, and the hope (faint though it be) of usefulness and success, enable him to persevere in christian fidelity and active exertion; yet he is sometimes ready to say, "I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought;" "rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law." But the labours and woes of earth will render the rest of heaven more glorious and happy. Labour indeed shall still form the employment of glorified man, but it is the labour which is far from the

weakness and exhaustion of a debilitated frame, and from the sorrows of a mind harassed by doubts with regard to the path of duty, experiencing a sense of difficulty, a dread of danger, and that disappointment which attends the failure of its purest purposes and best laid schemes. The saint rests from every temptation, is freed from every calamity, and is put in possession of the highest good of which his nature is susceptible.

It is added, "His works do follow him." No individual who is acquainted with the gospel scheme of salvation, can for a moment suppose that human sufferings can atone for the guilt of man, or human virtues obtain for him a title to an immortal life. Salvation is entirely of free grace, and all the redeemed are represented as casting their crowns before the throne of God and the Lamb; and with one heart and one voice throughout eternity they exclaim, "Not unto us, not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy "name be all the glory." "Worthy is the Lamb that "was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, "and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." Still, however, every good man receives his reward in the heavenly world;—and it is in some measure proportioned to the purity of his obedience, and the extent of his virtues. "For whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." I will not attempt to speak of the triumphant entrance of the humble, the despised, the persecuted martyr into the mansions of light and love; of the blessed meed of praise which he receives from his righteous Judge; and of the glory and splendour of that crown which he wears through everlasting ages.

But when we carry our views forward to eternity, we are not to look to those *alone* who have bled and died for the sake of Jesus. Such proofs of christian heroism can comparatively seldom be exhibited; and the spirit of the martyr may dwell in the breast of him whose piety was utterly unknown beyond the little circle in which he was called to move. The Father of all heard his sigh of penitence over the sins of his heart, and the transgressions of his life; marked his confiding faith in his Redeemer, and his humble yet entire dependence upon his promised grace; viewed the secret desire which he cherished for the good of others, while he was yet unable to mitigate their sorrows, or to increase their joys; followed him into the domestic circle, and beheld him conducting his children by the influence of authority, persuasion, example and prayer, into the paths of purity and peace; and traced the power of godliness pervading his sentiments, his feelings, and his actions, amid the varied scenes of common life. We are expressly assured in the sacred volume "that God is not unfaithful to forget his people's works and labours of love;" and "that not a cup of cold water given to a disciple in the name of a disciple shall lose its reward." Every act of christian piety and beneficence is pleasing to God; for it is performed in obedience to his authority; it springs from faith in his Son, it is generated by the grace of his Spirit, it constitutes the true dignity of man, and is the fulfilment of the great ends for which his being was bestowed. But the declaration, that the works of him who dies in the Lord shall follow him, has a meaning still more significant and important. Ignorant

mortals are apt to think and speak of holiness as the mere pathway which conducts to happiness. It is infinitely more than this; it is happiness---it is heaven itself. It is the mind which constitutes the weal or the woe of man, and although no individual in this world can be divested of a regard to external objects; or dead to the joys or the sorrows that pertain to humanity, yet the higher he rises in the scale of excellence, his soul becomes more weaned from earth, and he carries within himself the seeds of his enjoyments, the sources of his bliss—a peace which this world can neither give nor take away. It is true, my brethren, that there are graces and virtues in the Christian that are connected with the state of trial and discipline in which he is now placed; and which cannot be called into active exertion in the more exalted region to which he shall hereafter be translated. But they may have proved the instruments of forming in him that character of mind without which the joys of heaven would be unrelished and untasted. And many of the highest and noblest dispositions and feelings of the saint, which he delighted to cultivate when he dwelt in this land of shadows, will not be brought to their full perfection and fruition till he shall have passed the stormy billows of Jordan, be admitted into the presence of his God, and be united "to the spirits of the just made perfect." Reverence, humility, trust, thankfulness, submission, and obedience, are the very elements in which the glorified saint "lives and moves and has "his being." Revelations of wisdom may be unfolded to his mind, and objects of beauty disclosed to his eye, but all lead the soul directly and immediately

to its God, and promote a nearer and nearer resemblance to his moral image.

The spirit of man is not a material substance which decays and perishes with his frail body, and does not again revive to life and joy till the period of the general resurrection. No; the voice from heaven has declared, and the Holy Ghost has testified to the truth, "that those who die in the Lord shall "from HENCEFORTH rest from their labours, and "their works do follow them."

The text may well be considered as the Epitaph of the saints; and it comes home with a peculiar interest and power to the heart of every one of us at the present moment. A few days have hardly passed away, since the lifeless remains of the man of God whom we revered and loved, have been consigned to the cold and dreary mansions of the dead; and his place in the domestic circle, in the sanctuary, and at the table of communion, now knows him no more for ever. But "while we mourn, we mourn "not as those who have no hope," for it is our joy to know, that as he lived, so "he also died in the "Lord; and now rests from his labours, and his "works do follow him."

"To remember them that have had the rule over "us," is a precept of Divine Revelation suited to the feelings of our nature, and admirably adapted to produce the most beneficial influence upon our hearts and lives.—I feel my own inadequacy to the painful yet interesting task which has this day been assigned to me, and I am fully aware that faint and im-

perfect is the outline which I am able to present to you of the character of this distinguished master in Israel. Shall I recall to your recollection his powerful and comprehensive intellect, which hardly allowed any object, event, or scene, to pass unnoticed or unheeded; which grasped at once the most occult secrets of nature, the minutest details of history; and the most common incidents of ordinary life—which shrunk from no investigation however difficult or abstruse, that seemed adapted to exercise or expand the faculties of man, to increase the range of his information, or to enlarge his conceptions of the glory of the Creator and of the magnitude and excellence of His works—while at the same time he deemed no subject too trifling or insignificant to engage his attention; which was calculated even in the slightest degree to mitigate or relieve the ills of life, to add to the comfort of the domestic circle, or to augment the sum of human virtue, or the measure of human bliss? Shall I remind you of that retentive memory; which formed the rich and ample storehouse, in which he was accustomed to treasure up all that he had thought and read and heard?—of that lively and cultivated imagination which furnished the brightest images and the most appropriate and pleasing illustrations of religious and moral truth, from every department of nature, science and art?—and of that sound, prompt and discriminating judgment which seemed never to forsake him; and which he even carried into the formation of his opinions, and the direction of his conduct in circumstances the most trying and difficult? Shall I speak of the acuteness, the ingenuity, the force

of his reasoning; the skill with which he detected and exposed the arts of the sophist, and established sound principle on a firm, sure and solid foundation?—Or in fine, shall I dwell on that concentration of thought, and that enthusiasm of feeling which led him to cast his *whole soul* into every pursuit in which he engaged, and whatsoever he did, "to do it with all his might?"

Few men had studied more accurately the varied and complicated workings of the human heart; were better able to discern the secret springs of action, or were possessed of a more quick and almost intuitive perception of the excellencies or defects of character of those who moved in public life, or with whom he was called to associate in the ordinary intercourse of society.

His own mind was of a high and independent cast. He trampled not indeed on those venerable institutions in Church and State which have been formed, and matured, by the wisdom or the piety of byegone ages. He rejected no opinion or practice merely because it was old; nor refused its adoption only on account of its discovery having been reserved for modern times; but he carefully examined into its intrinsic merits, and thought, judged, and acted for himself. And his decisions were very generally guided by enlightened and practical views of human life. It might indeed at times be his lot to differ in sentiment from those whom he most esteemed and loved; but he firmly and conscientiously pursued the line of conduct which he deemed to be right; alike unmoved by the love of popularity, or the dread of censure; or what to a mind constituted like his was a far more seductive temptation, the influence

of private friendship and affection. To know, to love and to follow truth he considered the highest dignity of our rational and moral nature. Every approach to deceit or falsehood was viewed by him with utter abhorrence. His eye flashed with indignation, when he was told of ought that was mean, disingenuous or base, and his reprobation was often expressed in language of keen and unmeasured severity; nor had he the slightest sympathy, nor even almost any toleration for those who sought to promote the cause of God and righteousness by crooked policy, or by measures of a doubtful or ambiguous character. While his temper was naturally quick and irascible, he possessed a large share of those kind affections which so powerfully contribute to promote the happiness of social and domestic life. He was an affectionate husband, a kind father, an indulgent master, a patriotic citizen. His attachments were ardent and steady. The society and conversation of his friends formed one of the highest sources of his delight. With feelings of the liveliest interest he entered into all their varied circumstances; rejoiced in their every joy; sympathised in their every sorrow; and grudged neither time, nor thought, nor labour, nor money to advance their interest or to promote their welfare. The children of those who had been the companions of his youth, or the friends of his riper years, were ever dear to his heart. He seemed to transfer to them the love which he once delighted to cherish towards their parents. For myself I may be permitted to say, that during a long course of years I uniformly received from him all the kindness of a second father; and the hours which I

have spent in his company, I shall ever deem among the happiest of my life.

While in general society he was often reserved and silent; in his confidential intercourse with his friends there was an acuteness of observation, an accurate knowledge of the world, a variety of curious, minute, and important information upon almost every subject that could be suggested; a brilliancy of wit, and a kindliness of feeling, which rendered his conversation peculiarly attractive and delightful.

But while we this day recal with no common interest the high mental and moral qualities with which your pastor was endowed, we are never for a moment to forget—that sincere, unaffected and genuine godliness, was the principle which guided his opinions, and regulated and controlled his feelings and conduct, in every relation and condition of human life. It was this which curbed the power of indwelling corruption; and gave an ascendency to grace over the weaknesses, infirmities and errors which cleave to fallen nature; which purified, refined and elevated his virtues; conferred dignity and consistency on his character; animated and encouraged him in his labours of Christian usefulness, and enabled him to become "an example to the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." Whilst the superiority of his talents, and the *peculiar energy* of his mind, might have opened to him a path which conducts to worldly wealth and honour; he early dedicated his life to the service of his Redeemer in the work of the holy ministry; and to

his latest hour he never repented of the choice he had made.

A native of England, but descended from parents who were not in communion with the Episcopal Church; he prosecuted his philosophical and theological education at a dissenting academy at Brecknock in Wales, which was then held in considerable reputation, and where he was associated with many individuals who afterwards became useful and successful ministers of Christ. One *only* of their number remains to lament the loss of an early and attached friend, and to cherish the hope of meeting him again in that world where sorrow, and sin, and separation, and death are unknown.* His preparatory studies at the academy were hardly closed before he was called upon to assist Mr. Kinsman, an aged and exemplary clergyman at Plymouth. Here he remained only about two years; but during the course of that short time, he earned for himself a high and deserved reputation. His preaching was acceptable to all classes of his hearers, and we have reason to believe, was accompanied with the outpouring of the Spirit of God, and crowned with signal success. At this period he became acquainted with the amiable and distinguished Foundress of the Chapel where we now worship, whose name well deserves to be had "in everlasting remembrance," for the sincere piety, unaffected humility, and genuine excellence of her character,—for the works of faith

* The Rev. John Clayton, Sen. formerly minister, for a period of nearly fifty years, of an Independent Chapel in the city of London, whose piety, talent, and truly catholic spirit, has long secured him a high place in the esteem and regard of the Christian public.

and deeds of love which she performed during the course of her life, and for the provision she made to advance the cause of Christ, both in her native country and in England, after she had ceased from her labours and entered into her rest. Lady Glenorchy quickly and duly appreciated the value of the talents and virtues which even then adorned the character of our departed friend,—consulted him with regard to the various interests and concerns of herChapel ; and after having, for a short time, obtained the advantage of his instructions to the congregation who regularly assembled in this place, she earnestly entreated him to become their stated pastor. In accepting her offer, we cannot doubt that he was actuated by the purest and most conscientious motives. Although in a great measure a stranger to Scotland, and little acquainted with the Scottish Church, he most cheerfully and conscientiously subscribed her standards, firmly believing the doctrines they contained, and thoroughly persuaded of the excellence of the Presbyterian form of church government, when faithfully and impartially administered. Before finally quitting England he received ordination from the Scotch Presbytery in London. His settlement, as minister of this church, took place July 25th 1779. Nothing could be more gratifying to his feelings, or afford to him more encouraging prospects of usefulness, than the cordiality and affection with which he was welcomed by all his future hearers.

On the morning of the day in which he entered upon his ministrations, he was introduced to his flock by the Rev. Robert Walker of the High Church, one of the brightest ornaments of our Zion, and whose fa-

vourable opinion of a minister of the gospel was calculated to produce a powerful impression upon the mind of the Christian public. In the afternoon he commenced his instructions to those, "over whose souls he was appointed to watch as one who must give an account," by addressing them on this most suitable and appropriate text of Scripture, "I beseech you "brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for "the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me "in your prayers to God for me." Sensible of his own weakness, he looked for strength from the only source whence it could come. Convinced of the inefficacy of human exertion without Divine aid, he sought, by his own prayers united to those of his people, to obtain rich and abundant communications of the enlightening, regenerating, and sanctifying influence of the Holy Ghost. His labours were commenced with a firm and determined resolution to declare the *whole counsel* of God, rightly to divide the word of life, and to be instant in season and out of season in his Master's work. It was no meagre and undigested system of theology which he designed to illustrate and enforce, but the faith of prophets and apostles, of martyrs and confessors, of the wisest and the best of the saints on earth, and of the mighty company of the redeemed, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. In the most striking and impressive manner he unveiled the character of Jehovah, as it is manifested in the face of his only begotten and well-beloved Son —the spirituality and extent of the Divine law— the deep and innate depravity of man—his utter helplessness and inability to deliver himself from the

effects of transgression—the wisdom and efficacy of the incarnation, atonement, and intercession of Christ—the necessity of justification by faith, and of an entire change of heart and life—the resurrection of the bodies of believers and unbelievers—the eternal happiness of the one, and the everlasting misery of the other. These truths he employed to arouse the unregenerate to a sense of their guilt and danger, to guide those who had begun to inquire into the way of righteousness; to calm the fears of the penitent and contrite heart; to soothe the sorrows of the mourner; and to encourage and support the saint in his onward course to the heavenly Canaan. But while he faithfully inculcated the doctrine of the cross as the *alone ground* of a sinner's hope before God, and the only foundation on which the superstructure of virtue can be reared; he carefully and minutely discussed every part and portion of human duty;—not satisfied with the mere inculcation of holiness in general, but applying its specific obligations to every man's conscience in the sight of God; and urging his hearers to the exercise of Christian fidelity, both "in that which is much, "and in that which is little." While many of his interpretations and illustrations of passages of Scripture were highly ingenious and original, he uniformly rejected with abhorrence the heresies of former ages, or the crude and dangerous novelties in religion which have been prevalent in modern times. During the course of his lengthened ministration in this congregation, he delivered expository discourses on nearly every portion of the inspired volume. He served not God with that which cost him nothing;

nor did he consider himself entitled to give to his people those interpretations of the sacred text which happened to suggest themselves to his mind at the very moment when they were uttered. He had learned to consider that a far higher degree of reverence was due to the inspired oracles, and a greater measure of respect to the people among whom he laboured. It was his invariable custom not only to trace the connection in which the passage he was to expound, stood to the context, but also carefully to peruse it in the original Language; to bring to his aid all the light which secular history and Jewish antiquities could afford; to inquire into the sentiments of the most learned and approved commentators; to fix his own opinion with regard to the mind of the holy Spirit; and then carefully to apply it for the purposes of instruction, warning, encouragement, or consolation. His Lectures were fraught with the most important and valuable information, and were often listened to with the deepest interest, not only by the private Christian, but even by the most profound theological student. Like Apollos, he was mighty in the Scriptures. In his Sermons there was an originality of thought—a warmth of feeling—a richness of fancy—a copiousness and variety of illustration, united with a critical acumen, and a metaphysical power, seldom combined in the discourses of the same individual; which rendered them admirably adapted to afford delight to an intelligent audience—while the affectionate admonitions—the touching appeals—and the gracious invitations with which they were often closed, caused them to come home with a moral energy and

power to the humblest and most uneducated of the people. The influence of his ministry was greatly aided by the sublimity, fervour, and holy importunity of his public devotional exercises; and by the elevated views of religious truth, and Christian experience, which he poured forth from the "abundance of his heart" at the table of communion. Not a few individuals now alive, and many whose souls have entered into glory, have reason to acknowledge him as their spiritual father, and shall "form his joy and crown of rejoicing at the day of the Lord."

In his Life of Lady Glenorchy, not only a bright pattern of Christian excellence is presented to our view; but we have also a most interesting illustration of the value which he himself placed on the secret communion of the soul of a saint with its Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier; and of the deep interest which he felt in those penitential confessions of the sins of the heart; those ardent breathings after divine communications of grace, and that unwearied striving to obtain a closer walk with God, and a nearer conformity to His blessed image; which, although forming the very essence of vital religion, is branded by the worlding as the cant of hypocrisy, the ravings of enthusiasm, or the proofs of a weak and disordered mind.

His printed volume of Sermons is a precious memorial to *his people* of the lessons of wisdom and purity which they were accustomed to receive from his lips, and to *all* they furnish much valuable and important truth, presented in a form, calculated at once to enlighten the understanding and to improve the heart—but still those who were accustomed to

listen to the discourses of that venerable man, feel the want of the holy pathos, the impassioned eloquence, and the unpremeditated flights of genius which at times soared to other and loftier regions, and ransacked the whole vocabulary of human language, to give expression to the exalted conceptions he had formed, and vent to the ardent feelings and emotions which he longed to impress upon the hearts of his hearers.

Some of you, my brethren, may remember the case of a Jew, who was publicly baptized by your departed pastor. This individual was a Pole, and while residing in his native country, had begun to inquire into the truth of Christianity; but his mind was in a state of complete doubt and hesitation till he reached Edinburgh, and was directed by the good providence of God to attend this place of worship. The first thing which rivetted his attention, and made a deep impression upon his heart, was the seriousness and earnestness of the venerable preacher. His countenance, his voice, his manner, convinced him that he felt the infinite importance of the doctrines he delivered, and while sitting in the house of God, he resolved to make *him* his future counsellor and guide. He did so—and the result was—this descendant of Abraham became a genuine convert, and lived and died in the faith and hope of the gospel.

The enlightened mind and genuine piety of your pastor led him to be frequently consulted by persons who had experienced deep convictions of their own unworthiness,—who were labouring under spiritual depression—who were exposed to domestic trials—or who were at a loss to ascertain their path

of duty in painful and difficult circumstances—and none had reason to regret the confidence they reposed in him. He entered with the tenderness of a father into every thing connected with their situation; and his counsels were marked by that good sense, Christian prudence, and uncompromising principle by which he was so eminently characterized.—He was ever a minute and accurate observer of the ways of the Almighty to himself and to the flock over which the Lord had given him the oversight; and he carefully narrated and improved them for promoting the feelings of devotion in his own heart, and for diffusing personal and domestic religion amongst his people. It were easy to recal to your remembrance many instances of this in the course both of his public and private labours. I shall only select one.

On the fiftieth anniversary of the commencement of his ministrations in Scotland, (which was a short time previous to his being settled as the regular pastor of this congregation) he delivered a very striking and impressive discourse from Zechariah i. 5. "Your fathers where are they, and the prophets do they live for ever?" The sermon was closed in nearly these words—"In the year 1779, "just fifty years ago *yesterday*, I first was permitted "to enter into this house. The impression made "upon my mind was strong and solemn; and it "has never been effaced. On *this* day fifty years "ago, I first ascended the place from which I am "now addressing you, and opened my mouth with a "desire, I trust, to utter what was right in the "sight of God, by illustrating his mercy and grace "to a fallen world. I chose for my text the declara-

"tion of the holy apostle Paul, 'I am not ashamed of
"the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God
"unto salvation to every one that believeth.' There
"was before me an immense concourse of people.
"This church was built to accommodate nearly
"eighteen hundred persons; and it was always
"reckoned that, when more than ordinarily crowded,
"it would hold two thousand. On that day it was
"crowded to excess; and I believe there must have
"been two thousand persons present: I look around
"me *now*, and I see only about six or eight of these;
"and in regard to the rest, I am led to put the ques-
"tion, 'your fathers where are they?' I have en-
"deavoured to obtain an answer to this interesting
"interrogatory. I have read over the communion
"roll of your predecessors, and other documents,
"which bring to my remembrance the persons who
"composed that numerous assembly. I have made
"enquiry among my venerable brethren of the elder-
"ship, who were present at that day's service, some
"of whom are now confined to the habitations of
"sickness and sorrow; and I have endeavoured in
"this way to come to a conclusion; and this conclu-
"sion is, that of the two thousand persons then pre-
"sent, about twenty are now alive; ninety-nine out
"of the hundred have descended into the grave and
"are gone to eternity—either to the dungeon of the
"prisonhouse, or to the city of God and the house of
"rest, to walk for ever with their Saviour in glory.—
"I have reason to believe, that at that time there
"were about a hundred and forty ministers of the
"gospel within the bounds of the Synod of Lothian
"and Tweeddale, including those of every denomi-

"nation; and if the question be now put in reference "to these, 'the prophets, do they live for ever?' I "have to answer, that of the whole hundred and "forty ministers who were with me running the "course of life fifty years ago, not one remains upon "the earth save myself. I have no occasion, and "shall not attempt to say more, but earnestly to en- "treat, that you will carry home these things to your "closets, and be excited to pray to God for a right "improvement of the question, 'your fathers, where "are they, and the prophets, do they live for ever?'"

After the delivery of the discourse, the interesting conclusion of which I have now recalled to your remembrance, our venerable father continued for more than five years to discharge, with the utmost regularity, his pulpit duties, and to preside in the administration of the Lord's Supper—a service which had been the peculiar joy of his heart during every period of his ministry; and the recurrence of which, (although more than usually frequent in this congregation,) he always anticipated with feelings of deep interest and high satisfaction. As the period drew near when his public labours in his Master's work were about to terminate, many of the most intelligent of his hearers remarked an increasing earnestness in the exhortations and expostulations which he addressed to the open profligate, the formalist, and the hypocrite; a still more elevated and ardent strain of piety, and a more constant allusion to topics connected with experimental and practical religion. In the strongest sense of the words, "he spoke as a dying man to dying but immortal creatures."

The truth of this observation was strikingly ma-

nifested in the address which he delivered at the Lord's Table on the last occasion on which it pleased his heavenly Father to permit him to dispense, and to receive the memorials of redeeming love. The service of the day had been introduced by an excellent and appropriate discourse from his colleague on these words—" There remaineth a rest for the people of God." This formed the ground of the solemn meditations to which he directed the attention of his hearers and fellow-communicants; and, after dwelling, in a powerful and impressive manner, on the blessedness of the righteous, both in this world and in that which is to come, he expressed the warm and grateful feelings of his own heart in nearly these terms—" It may not be altogether un-
" profitable were I here to digress for a few moments,
" and tell you of the experience of one far advanced
" in years, and who now, blessed be God, in some
" measure, enjoys a foretaste of that rest, to which
" your attention has just been directed. My Christian
" brethren, this morning's sun announced to me that
" I had lived to see fourscore years pass over my
" head; during which long period I have experienced
" much of the Lord's goodness and mercy, and this I
" hold an earnest that he has destined me (unworthy
" as I am) 'for that rest which remaineth for the people
" of God.' Yes, I will at all times bear my testimony
" to the abundant kindness of my Lord and Master
" during a life lengthened out beyond the accustomed
" allotment of man. But in what manner shall I tell
" you of all his mercies to me? Where shall I find a
" beginning? Where shall I find an end? What
" did I experience in childhood? mercy. In youth

"what did I receive? mercy. In riper years what "was bestowed upon me? mercy. And now, in old "age, as these hoary locks and furrowed cheeks do "testify, with one foot in the grave, and the other on "the brink, I exclaim, mercy! mercy! Goodness and "mercy have followed me all the days of my life; and "I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. "Yes, and though it well becomes me to smite upon "my breast and cry out, God be merciful to me a "sinner; yet for the honour and glory of my Master's "name, I *will* declare that goodness and mercy *have* "not only followed me, but *will* follow me all the "days of my life. Of this I am persuaded, nay, feel "confident, and also that I *shall* dwell in the house "of the Lord for ever."

While this aged saint seemed deeply impressed with a sense of his nearness to eternity, there were no circumstances connected with the state of his health calculated to excite alarm in the minds of his family and friends; while advancing years added additional interest to his pastoral instructions and private converse. On the day when he exhibited the first symptom of that disease, which for so long a period prevented him from engaging in the active duties of life, deprived him of many of its most valued pleasures, and ultimately terminated in his dissolution, he had attended the public services of the church, on the fast before the communion, in a parish where he resided during the summer. Afterwards lying on his sick bed, he stated to a friend, "that he felt himself unwell in the begin-"ning of that week; but said little about it, being de-"sirous to enjoy God in his own ordinances, and by "his example to excite others to do so also." I saw

him two days, after his seizure with paralysis had taken place; and never shall the interesting, affecting, and truly edifying scene I then witnessed, be effaced from my recollection. When I entered his apartment he received me with even more than his wonted kindness and affection: a fearful change had taken place upon his frame; but his understanding was clear and vigorous, his mind calm and placid, and his conversation devout and instructive.

"Truly, (said he) the Lord hath shown great "kindness to me in the days that are past. In child- "hood and youth, I was thoughtless, irreligious, and "wicked. But at the age of seventeen, I was arrest- "ed by the power of the Holy Ghost, the gospel was "brought home in its converting and saving energy "to my heart; and it pleased my heavenly Father "'to pluck me as a brand from the burning.' I wash- "ed in the fountain of the Redeemer's blood; my "whole dependence is placed on his righteousness; "and although I am a miserable sinner, yet rely- "ing on his promises, if this very night I should die, "(and in all probability I shall) I do not entertain "a doubt of receiving admission into the paradise of "God." To another friend he thus expressed himself; "The Lord took me up when a youth, and will not "forsake me when I am old and grey-headed. Tell "any of my people who may be inquiring after me, "that the atonement of Christ, which I have so often "preached to them, is my only solace." And at another time, when he thought himself approaching very near death, he desired "that his congregation might be "informed, when he was no more; that although "he did not experience that high degree of joy and

" triumph which had been tasted by some of the peo-
" ple of God in like circumstances, he yet looked for-
" ward to dissolution with the full assurance of faith
" and hope. It was his ardent desire, and fervent
" prayer, that his people might be enabled to walk
" through this life in the paths of peace and holiness ;
" that, although separated for a little from each
" other, he and they might at last meet again around
" the throne of God and of the Lamb."

While he continued in a very precarious situation, apparently hovering, between time and eternity, the period arrived for the celebration of the Lord's Supper in this congregation ; and I am persuaded many of you will recollect the affecting and interesting paper which he desired to be read during the course of divine service, on the evening previous to that solemnity,—" in which he expressed his heartfelt
" thankfulness for the goodness of God manifested to
" him, in enabling him to attend the communion of the
" Lord's Supper for more than fifty-five years,—and
" that now, only for the first time, he was prevented
" by *great infirmity* from being present at that solemn
" ordinance. He then proceeded to entreat the pray-
" ers of his congregation, that if he were not again
" permitted to unite with them in the communion
" of the Lord's table upon earth ; he might be pre-
" pared and admitted to hold communion with them
" in the kingdom of heaven."

It pleased the Supreme Disposer of events, to restore our revered father and friend to the enjoyment of his domestic circle ; and although he no longer possessed the full use of his limbs, and was unfit for ministerial duty, his mental energy seemed unabated.

He again resumed his former theological and general studies, manifested the same interest in almost every public and private event, and appeared to have as much delight as ever in the society of those whom he valued and loved. Several hours of every morning were devoted to the perusal of the Word of God; to a careful and diligent inquiry into its meaning, and into the practical lessons of faith and holiness which it is calculated to teach. We cannot doubt that this truly Christian exercise was uniformly accompanied with earnest and believing prayer to the God of the Bible, whom he had so long and so faithfully served in the gospel of His Son.—The progress of disease at last arrested the course of his studies, and diminished the number of the enjoyments which still remained to him.—But the unwearied attention, of affectionate relatives and attached domestics, and still more, the influence of Christian principle, powerfully contributed to cheer the evening of his days. About two or three months ago, when he had been suffering from a severe feverish attack, I visited him and made the usual inquiries with regard to his health. His answer was,—"I am as well as a dying "man can be; and I can say with the Psalmist, this "God is my God, and He will be my guide even unto "death." I did not see him again till three days before the close of his mortal pilgrimage. I then found him perfectly sensible, although unable to express himself in a manner which could easily be understood. He evidently joined with seriousness and fervour in the prayers which were offered up, and when amongst many other consolatory passages of Scripture, I repeated the sublime and triumphant

declaration of St. Paul, "I am persuaded that neither "death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor "powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor "height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be "able to separate us from the love of God which is in "Christ Jesus our Lord," he audibly, distinctly, and energetically said, "Amen." While next day he seemed perfectly aware of the devotional exercises which were offered up beside his dying bed, he never again was able to give utterance to the pious feelings of his heart, and at last expired without a struggle. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the latter end of that man is peace." On his own account we have no cause this day to mourn; but rather to rejoice and be glad. "He hath gone to his grave in full age, "like as a shock of corn cometh in, in his season;" without a stain upon his memory; beloved by his family, his flock, and all with whom he was associated in life; and venerated and esteemed by every class of the community. We may well apply to him the words of Jehovah, spoken by the mouth of his prophet Malachi, "my covenant was with him of life and "peace; and I gave them to him for the fear where- "with he feared me, and was afraid before my name. "The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was "not found in his lips; he walked with me in peace "and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity."

Immediately adjoining the spot where his remains are deposited, we behold the graves of Paul, of Black, and of Fleming, devoted servants of the Lord, with whom he had lived as a friend and a brother, and with whom he shall rise again at the great day of final retribution, to receive that glorious reward

which is reserved for those who have been faithful stewards of the mysteries of the kingdom of God.

Faith assures us of the existence of a region in the universe of God, where the spirits of departed saints, delivered from the varied ills to which humanity is heir, are made perfect in holiness, and united in the nearest and most endearing bonds to the Saviour whom they love; rest in peace, in the assured hope of a glorious and blessed resurrection. Yet still the gospel forbids not the tear which nature constrains to flow, while we mourn the loss of one who was our counsellor and our guide, our father and our friend; who formed the last link that united us to some of the wisest, the holiest, and the best of the servants of the living God of a former age; who is associated in our remembrance with seasons of solemn worship, Christian instruction, and devout intercourse with Heaven; who mingled his tears with those of many who now hear me; while they stood around the sick, the dying bed of a beloved parent or child; and who, when the last sigh was breathed, and the last groan was uttered, guided their thoughts to heaven; taught them to repose in the love of that God who hath promised that "He will never leave nor forsake his people;" and in accents of tender affection, encouraged them "to become followers of those, who "now, through faith and patience, inherit the promises."

High and important however, are the duties which it remains to us to perform, while our heavenly Father is pleased to prolong our existence here below. You, my brethren, are called as individuals, and as a congregation, to engrave upon your memories, and

to impress upon your hearts the lessons of heavenly wisdom and grace, which you have heard from the lips of your lamented pastor—to imitate the holy qualities which adorned his character—"to consider the end of his conversation—Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;" and earnestly to strive to obtain an entrance into that world, where he has already gone before you; that so dying in the Lord, you may rest from your labours, and your works may follow you;—which, may God in his infinite mercy grant, for Christ's sake. Amen.

APPENDIX.

The annexed conclusion of a discourse delivered by Dr. Jones on the morning of the communion, 10th July 1814, from Psalms cxvi. 18, 19. cannot fail to prove both interesting and instructive.

" Upon this occasion I cannot refrain from speaking of myself. It is now nearly thirty-five years since I first occupied this place on occasions similar to the present, and if I shall be permitted this day to descend from this pulpit to the table of our Lord, it will be the two-hundredth time that this ordinance has been dispensed since I came here. On all these occasions, I have presided at that table. During these two hundred times, I have never been absent upon one occasion ; which I can scarcely suppose is the case with any one who now hears me. I have seen, since I first came here, the ancient and the honourable, long since laid in the silent tomb. I have seen the children rising up instead of the fathers, a seed to serve the Lord ; some who had walked in the way of God's commandments have I seen called at an early period to render their account, and who, I doubt not, have received the reward for the deeds done in the body. Thirty-five years ago *I* first sat down at that table. At that time there might be from 1700 to 1800 persons present. I have made inquiry, and from this inquiry, as well as from what I myself know, I find that of that vast assemblage only forty-five are at this time alive ; of these forty-five only twenty-three remain in communion with us, and of these twenty-three, I do not suppose that there are more than twenty now present. The remainder have, many of them, long since descended to the grave, and their spirits ascended to the God from whom they came. When I first sat down at that table, I had come from another country ; I was then a child and an orphan—a stranger to this land,—ignorant of the laws and customs and

manners of this people. But, through the blessing of God I have been permitted to see this day. And, when I look back and consider what is past, I remember that I have seen the dark and gloomy night of adversity ; but I would fail in duty and gratitude to my God, were I not to acknowledge that I have also seen the bright sun-shine of prosperity ; it is true I have been forsaken by men, but I have never been forsaken by God. He has been a kind and gracious God to me. When I retrace the past, I cannot refrain from saying with the Psalmist, 'I will pay my vows unto the Lord.'

" But when we look back, we should also carry our thoughts forward. Another period of thirty-five years will soon roll on. But who will see that period? Another preacher will then speak from this place—other individuals will form the body of the hearers—and of all whom I now address, only a very small number may live to see that time. Those who do may perhaps recollect when the four hundredth time arrives, that their former pastor arrested their particular attention on that day when the Sacrament was dispensed among them for the two hundredth time. Long ere that time, however, *my* head shall be laid low in the dust ; and you—and you—and you—and, it may be, all this numerous congregation, will have been called out of this world to render up their account to the great Judge of heaven and earth. And, my brethren, when we appear before the judgment throne, what if all our vows offered at that table for two hundred times should be so many perjuries ; what if all our prayers should be found to be so many lies ; what, if we should meet with that righteous indignation which is denounced against those who have not lived and died in the Lord ! Oh, it is full time for us to consider—it is full time for us to cast our thoughts back on the past ; to carry them forward to the future ; to consider well our ways ; and then, in the presence of this Christian congregation let you and me publicly make our vows unto the Lord ; and declare in the words of our text " we will pay our vows unto the Lord."

SERMON.

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2 Timothy iv. 6—8. *"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."*

There are few characters delineated in Scripture, which engage the attention, or interest the feelings in a higher degree, than the character of Paul. It contains an assemblage of the rarest and most estimable qualities, so intimately blended together, as to form a character at once varied but natural—decided, yet endearing.

With the earliest part of his life we are but little acquainted, and when first introduced to our notice, he appears in a very revolting character. But it pleased the Lord who is rich in mercy, not only to convert him from the errors of his ways, but to call and consecrate him as "a chosen vessel, to bear his name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."

The conversion of Paul is a distinguished trophy of the power of redeeming grace, and in its conse-

quences may be regarded as one of the most important events in the history of the Christian church. If the former part of his life furnishes an illustration of the deepest enmity, and most daring opposition to the kingdom of Christ—the latter presents a noble example of devotedness to His cause, and of fidelity and zeal in His service.

From the time when it pleased God to reveal His Son in him, he might well say of himself, "To me to live is Christ." This was what engaged the supreme affection of his heart, concentrated all his energies, called forth his surpassing exertions, and constituted his glory and joy.

The point of view in which he is presented to us in the words of the text, is exceedingly interesting. We see him standing, as it were, on the confines of the eternal world—feeling all the solemnity of his position, and yet possessing his soul, not only in calmness and confidence, but in joy and triumph. In looking back, he recognises a life dedicated to the service of his Divine Master, and rejoices in all that Christ had wrought in him, and by him; and in looking forward, he anticipates the full fruition of that glorious inheritance which "is reserved in heaven for all those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." These sentiments are expressed in the words of our text in a very beautiful and striking manner.

There are two topics set forth in this passage that claim our particular attention.

I. What the apostle says of his present condition.

II. Of his future prospects.

With respect to his present condition, he states,

"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

While our translation conveys in substance, the meaning of the apostle, yet some of the ideas are not so fully brought out as in the original. The expression might have been rendered, "I am already offered up, or poured forth." There appears to be an allusion here to the practice under the law, of accompanying the burning of the sacrifice with the pouring out of wine or oil as a drink-offering. This contributed to the completeness of the sacrifice, and to the attainment of the great ends for which it was presented. When the apostle says, "I am now offered, or already poured forth," his words are to be understood to mean, that in the denial of self, and in suffering for Christ, he is like a libation or offering connected with the sacrifice of the Son of God. While that sacrifice is infinitely perfect and complete in itself, and neither needeth nor can admit of any addition whatever; yet it is the wise and gracious appointment of God, that what was realized in the Head as an atonement, should be realized in the members as an accompaniment; and that as the Captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings, so we "being partakers of Christ's sufferings shall also be made partakers of His glory."

That this is a correct view of the apostle's meaning, is supported by what he says elsewhere. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." And in another place,—"God forbid that I should

glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

In the first ages of Christianity, the severest privations and sufferings were almost the certain portion of all who embraced the gospel. The Apostle himself occupied the foremost rank among these. "In labours he was more abundant—in stripes above measure—in prisons more frequent—in deaths oft." Now, all this had a close connection with the cause of Christ, and "happened to him for the furtherance of the gospel." He therefore speaks of "Christ as magnified in his body whether by life or by death."

In describing his present condition, Paul could not have used more correct and appropriate language, than to say, "I am now offered up, and already poured out." In love to the person of Christ, and devotedness to His cause—in willingness to endure hardness—to encounter dangers and suffer death for His sake, he was already a confessor and a martyr.

Suffering for Christ was with him a continued and constant thing. Every day was a day of testimony, and every time a time of trial. Well therefore might he say, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed,—we are perplexed, but not in despair,—persecuted, but not forsaken,—cast down, but not destroyed,—always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."

But the Apostle here intimates that the closing scene should be suitable to his present condition. Indeed, the only outlet from it in the natural course of things,

was through the portals of a violent and bloody death. From the very beginning he "had counted the cost," and calmly contemplated such a close. It was early intimated to him by the Spirit that bonds and imprisonments awaited him." But none of these things moved him, neither did he count his life dear unto himself, that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

After what we have already seen of the Apostle's condition in this world, it cannot surprise us that he should contemplate his removal from it as a great deliverance,—He speaks of it here as "the time of his departure." To the unbeliever, indeed, death is an awful event. It is associated in his mind with every thing that causeth fear and horror. It is the closing in of a night that shall know no dawn—the coming on of a destruction from which there is no deliverance.

But with the Christian, the case is very different. Death to him is deprived of all its terrors, for he is enabled through faith to say, "O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory! the sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Paul was strong in the faith, giving glory to God; and therefore his mind was not only free from the fear of death, but he earnestly looked and longed for its coming,—"He desired to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better."

In the language here employed, there is a refer-

ence to the first motion of a ship when actually entering upon her voyage. After all the necessary preparations have been made, and the previous arrangements completed,—when every thing is in a state of readiness,—the cargo is on board, the crew collected, the sails unfurled, the anchor weighed, the favourable breeze springs up, and then the gallant vessel departs on her voyage in the hope that it may be safe and prosperous. The Apostle applies this illustration to his own case. From the moment of his conversion, he was in a state of preparation for his departure, "Old things were passed away, and all things becoming new." There was "the preparing of the vessel for the Master's use,"—the clearing and casting out of every thing that was corrupt and sinful,—and the laying in of those precious things that were suited to the nature of the voyage for which it was destined. There was the gradual loosening from earthly ties and connections, and the earnest looking for the signal of departure, in the full assurance of reaching in safety the shores of Emmanuel's land, and entering the haven of eternal rest.

Alas! my brethren, how little capable are we of sympathizing with the emotions which animated the mind of the apostle when he uttered the words before us! Although called by the name of Christ, and professing to set our affections on the things that are above; is it not too manifest from our conduct, that our souls cleave unto the dust, and that our desires and hopes and expectations go forth towards the things that are seen and temporal! Let us earnestly

seek to put off the old man with his deeds, and to have our loins girded, and our lamps burning, that we may be like those who are waiting for the coming of their Lord.

The apostle speaks here, not only of his actual position, but also of the course of life by which he arrived at it, or had attained to the state of preparation for his departure in which we now find him. With respect to that course, he represents it as a contest, as a race, and as an exercise of vigilance and fidelity. All these belong to the life of every true Christian, but they were realized in an eminent degree in the life of Paul.

Whenever a man is translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son, he enters immediately upon a state of warfare. He comes under the banner of the cross, and is called upon to fight as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. This warfare is in its own nature, and in all the circumstances connected with it, of a spiritual character; but it is not on that account the less arduous and severe. On the contrary, it requires greater valour and vigilance, greater sacrifices and privations, greater hardships and exertions, than any other contest in which the children of men can be engaged. It calls into exercise, all the energies and capacities of our nature, under the guidance and grace of God's Holy Spirit. It is He who teacheth our hands to war, and our fingers to fight the good fight of faith, and to lay hold on eternal life.

The apostle calls this contest "a good fight," because it is the most righteous, and necessary, and

glorious, in which any created beings can be engaged. It is the opposition of light to darkness, of truth to error, of holiness to sin, of the Son of God to the "rulers of the darkness of this world, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."

The enemies with whom the believer is called to contend in this warfare, are the devil, the world, and the flesh.

These enemies are mighty and malignant. They possess the same character, they are united in the closest compact, and mutually sustain and strengthen one another. They are not satisfied with a partial advantage over the believer. They aim at nothing less than his everlasting destruction.

The leader of these enemies is the devil or Satan, "the roaring lion who walketh about seeking whom he may devour."

The apostle could say respecting this adversary, "I have fought a good fight." Clothed in the whole armour of God, and animated by the courage which His Spirit imparts, he maintained against him a strenuous and successful struggle. Paul foiled this adversary, and was "more than conqueror through Him that loved him."

The world is another of the believer's foes, against which he is required to maintain continual opposition. Under the term *world* when used in this sense, is comprehended, whatever in it is calculated or capable of drawing the heart away from God. Its cares and concerns, its business and pleasures, its riches and honours, its vanities and evil ways, are all capable of exercising a hostile influence over our

minds, and ready to lead us into the commission of iniquity. The believer is called upon to exercise constant watchfulness against these things, and to oppose them in the strength of God's Spirit.

There is a right use of the things of the world, and there is a misapplication and abuse of them. When they are received and regarded as gifts from God, when they are held by His grant, enjoyed according to His purpose, and devoted to His glory, they are among the things which "work together for good to those who love God, and who are the called according to His purpose." But when allowed to occupy the place in the heart that is due to God, and made to minister to the sinful gratification of ourselves or others; in that case, they are greatly opposed to the will of God, and most injurious to our eternal interests.

We are therefore required to strive against these things as adversaries to our souls, and to share in the triumph of the apostle when he says, "This is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith."

But we know that the flesh also is an enemy to the soul, as well as the devil and the world. By the *flesh* is meant in this acceptation, the corruption of our whole nature as alienated from God by sin. Of the believer however, it is true, that he is "born again and become a new creature." There is introduced into his heart, the leaven of holiness which opposeth this corruption, and continues to exert and extend its influence till the whole of his nature is leavened. But its progress towards this object is greatly resisted by the remaining corruption. "The

flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that we cannot do the things that we would."

The result of this struggle is certain, and yet the progress of it is attended with much suffering to the believer. It is required of him to "pluck out the right eye,"—to "cut off the right hand,"—to "crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts,"—and to "mortify his members which are upon the earth."

The apostle was constantly and successfully engaged in this opposition to the flesh. He was keenly alive to the sore oppression of sin, and made to cry out in the agony of his resistance to it, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and yet he could joyfully add, "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

It is evident from the whole language of this passage, that Paul had an eye to the celebrated games of antiquity, and that the views which he gives of his own course of life correspond with some of the principal exercises in these games. He had already spoken of the fight or wrestling, and now he speaks of the foot-race. Running was one of the exercises practised in these games, and the course was the space to be passed over by the competitors. This course was carefully marked out and precisely determined, and therefore it was incumbent upon every one that started for the prize, not only to run well, but to keep strictly within the prescribed course, and to persevere unto the end.

These circumstances beautifully illustrate the na-

ture of the Christian race, with the various obligations and duties connected with it. It is "the race that is set before us." Every step of it is marked out, and every stage of it determined by the supreme authority of God. Hence it is called "the way of his commandments."

There is set before us every thing that belongs to a life of true godliness in the doctrines and precepts of God's law and dispensations of his providence,—in the conduct of his saints, and especially in the character of his own Son, "who hath left us an example that we should follow in his steps." "Wherefore seeing we also are encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith."

The apostle on another occasion said respecting this race, "I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

But now he speaks differently. It seems to have been made known to him that he was very near the goal. He felt as if there was but a step between him and the prize, and therefore he raises the shout of victory and says, "I have *finished* my course, I have kept the faith."

By *the faith* the apostle here means "the truth as it is in Jesus."

From the time that he had been brought to the saving knowledge of the truth he kept it as one keeps

a precious treasure, or guards and defends a garrison. He kept it carefully, and constantly, and successfully.

He kept the doctrine of faith in purity and soundness, against the errors, and heresies, and delusions that began to prevail.

He kept the profession of it "without wavering," testifying both to small and great repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. He "was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

He also kept the practice of this faith.

It was not only the foundation of his hope and confidence, but the invariable rule of his life. In his doctrine he studied to set forth the beauty and excellency of "the truth as it is in Jesus," and in his practice to "adorn that doctrine by a life and conversation becoming the gospel." He desired to be "a living epistle of the truth, known and read of all men." And what he thus desired, he was enabled by the grace of God to realise and accomplish. "He maintained a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward man," and could make this appeal to the Thessalonians among whom he had lived so long, "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe."

After having taken notice of what the apostle here says of his present condition, we are next to advert, shortly, to what he declares respecting his *future prospects*. "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

The language of Paul is not to be understood to

affirm that he had acquired and established for himself by his own conduct or course of life, a title to the felicity and glory of the heavenly state. Nothing could be farther from his mind than to insinuate, far less to assert such a claim. It is a first principle of the doctrine of Christ, " that we have nothing but what we have received." Why then should we boast as if we had not received it ?

The salvation that is in Christ Jesus is altogether of free grace. It originated in the marvellous love of God. In its progress it sets forth the unsearchable riches of Christ; and when it is completed and perfected, " the Lord shall bring forth the head stone thereof with shoutings, saying, Grace, grace, unto it."

When the Apostle here says, " Henceforth there is laid up,"—the expression might have been rendered,—" As to what remains," or, " in respect of the rest," " there is laid up for me."

He had already spoken of his own character and course of life,—and now he speaks of the certain consequence or conclusion. The close of a life of faith, is the commencement of a life of glory. The one necessarily leads to the other. " To whom the Lord giveth grace, He will also give glory." This magnifies the exceeding greatness of the love of God. He first bestows the grace, without which we can do nothing which is truly good,—and then he requites and rewards it as if it were all our own ! " This is the doing of the Lord, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

The state of blessedness that awaits the righteous in the kingdom of their Father, is often set forth in Scripture under the notion of a crown. This is the

emblem of the highest dignity, and felicity, and glory. It is reasonable to suppose that the Apostle has some respect here to the chaplets that frequently constituted the reward of the successful competitors in the Olympic games. These were of a perishing nature, and were eagerly sought after, not from any intrinsic value or preciousness that belonged to themselves,—but from the distinction which the possession of them conferred, and the fame with which it was associated.

In opposition to these, the apostle says of the crown which he anticipated, that it is "a crown of glory that fadeth not away." The properties and excellencies of this crown are referred to in various passages of Scripture. It is called the crown of life, because it is the perfection and consummation of eternal blessedness, the crown of glory, because "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." And here it is called "the crown of righteousness," because it sets forth the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, and displays grace reigning through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

The apostle further says of this crown, that it was "laid up for him." This denotes the reality, the preciousness, and certain attainment of the heavenly felicity. It is cared for, and kept as a thing of unspeakable value. This language also refers to the manner in which it was procured and provided, for all those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." It is the purchase of the Redeemer's obedience unto the death.

It is secured by purpose and destination, by cove-

nant, by promise, by the earnest of the Spirit, and the foretaste given of it here. Hence it is said of believers, that "all things are theirs, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are theirs; and they are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

The apostle here speaks in the language of perfect assurance of receiving, and realizing the heavenly felicity. Indeed he represents it as an exercise of righteousness on the part of the great Judge of all, to bestow upon him eternal blessedness.

It is a principle of the Divine administration, that they who are "faithful unto death, shall receive the crown of life." The grace of God had enabled the apostle to be steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; and therefore he felt confident that his labours should not be in vain in the Lord."

With regard to himself, as a sinner, but at the same time a brand plucked out of the burning, he was sensible that he could never sufficiently admire the ways and wonders of redeeming grace; and yet in respect of what God had accomplished in him, and by him, he triumphed in the assurance that everlasting glory should be his portion.

But while the apostle thus speaks of his own future prospects, his generous and loving heart exulted at the thought of the multitudes who should share with him in the heavenly felicity. He anticipated, with suitable emotions, the consummation of all things, and the full accomplishment of the glorious things said of the *appearing* of the Lord, when he

shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe.

"Then they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that have turned many to righteousness, as the stars, for ever and ever."

After contemplating such a character as that of the Apostle Paul, who can refrain from giving utterance to the language of admiration and joy, by saying, "What hath God wrought!"

When we consider the view that is presented to us in the former part of his history, of the guilt and sinfulness of our natural state and condition, and of the pride and presumption and enmity of our hearts towards God,—and when we find in the change wrought in him such convincing evidence of the certainty and greatness of the mercy of God to us in Christ Jesus our Lord. When we see how his Spirit can bring a clean thing out of an unclean—and even form out of the mass of our enmity and corruption a being so enlightened in his views—so pure in his affections—so denied to self, and devoted to God—so holy in his desires, and heavenly in his character, we may well exclaim, "This is the doing of the Lord, and it is marvellous in our eyes!"

The apostle found it needful on various occasions to vindicate his own conduct, and set forth his own excellencies,—but he was most careful to ascribe the praise to the glory of God's grace, "By the grace of God," says he, "I am what I am." His great desire was, to shew forth the praises of this grace, and "to make his light so to shine before men, that others seeing his good works, might give glory to our Father

which is in heaven." Let us go and do likewise,—and seek to glorify God in our bodies and spirits which are God's.

My dear brethren, you can easily perceive the suitableness of this subject to the circumstances in which we are now placed, and must have in some measure anticipated the application that we are called to make of it.

It hath pleased God to remove by death the late venerable and beloved minister of this church, and pastor of this congregation. The ample account that was given of his character and history in the former part of the day, renders it quite unnecessary for me to enlarge upon these topics. Indeed, it would be an unprofitable repetition to go over the same details. But while an equally particular account should not be attempted, yet a similar testimony to the excellency of one who was eminently dear to us, may prove soothing to our feelings, and salutary to our hearts.

I feel persuaded that the outward symbols of woe assumed in consequence of this event, are sure indications of the heart-felt sorrow that prevails, not only among you, but throughout this city, and over all this land.

He was one of that venerable and faithful band who adorned by their labour and lives the ministry of the gospel in this place, and who shed a lustre over the city of their habitation, and the church to which they belonged. Your revered pastor was the last of these godly men—the remnant of a generation that is now passed away—the representative of pastors

whose praise was in all the churches, and to the recollection of whom the heart clings with fond attachment.

As a man, he possessed qualities and powers that fitted him for acting an important part in life, and for rising to distinction among his brethren. With an understanding acute and vigorous in a high degree—with a judgment sound and prompt in its decisions—with an imagination capable of discovering whatever is sublime and beautiful in the whole regions of human thought, and with a heart tuned to the finest sensibilities, and habitually exercised in adoring communion with his God, and endearing intercourse with those connected with him,—he must have left an impression on the minds of all who enjoyed the happiness of his friendship or affection, which no distance of time shall be able to efface.

They cannot but remember him as a man of high intellectual attainments—of unimpeachable honour—of strict integrity—of steady friendship—of amiable manners—of uniform consistency—of exalted piety—of holy life—and of eminent usefulness. I do not, and dare not say of him, that he was without faults and failings and sins. If I were to do so, I should contradict the Word of God, and offend against the generation of His children. But I may say of him, that "he was an example of the believer in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."

It had pleased the Lord to cast his lot in very important and trying times, when events took place that greatly agitated men's minds, and led to strife and contention among brethren. While he was keenly alive to the importance of these events, and

entertained very decided opinions respecting them, yet was he enabled "to maintain a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man," and to give no offence in any thing that the ministry might not be blamed.

The whole tenor of his life possessed a character of sacredness, that beautifully harmonised with his office as a minister of the gospel. As the morning of his days was full of promise, so the meridian was bright and the evening blessed. His sun went down without a cloud to mar the beauty of the horizon, and without a shadow of suspicion attached to his character. He was respected and loved while he lived, and he died full of years and of honour. His memory will be preserved as a sacred deposit, laid up in the hearts of all who knew him.

But, my dear brethren, it is as a minister of Christ and the pastor of this people, that I am called on this mournful occasion to speak of him more particularly. Instead of referring, however, to my own observation and experience, instead of speaking of the many blessings that I have enjoyed, during a long course of confidential intercourse and ministerial communion with him. Instead of attempting to describe the delight with which I have sat at his feet, and heard him pour out of the fulness of his heart the strains of devotion, and bring forth from his treasures, with glowing eloquence, things new and old; may I not rather appeal to *you* as the best qualified witnesses of what he was as a preacher of the gospel, and as an ambassador of Christ. You know that the constant subject of his preaching was "Christ Jesus and Him crucified," and the great ob-

ject of his ministry to win souls to Christ and beseech men to be reconciled to God,—that he shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God, and kept nothing back that might be profitable to the hearers.

With respect to his discourses, you cannot have failed to discern their superior excellence. You must have observed the great extent of his knowledge in the things of God, the originality and solidity of the thoughts, the evangelical strain of the sentiments, the clearness of the method, the beauty of the language, the brilliancy of the illustrations, the force of the reasoning, and the affection and faithfulness with which he pressed home his subject on the consciences and hearts of the hearers.

But you have had opportunities not only of appreciating the excellency of his public instructions, but of enjoying his private ministrations. You have seen him enter your dwellings as the messenger of peace and consolation, that he might sympathize with you in all the varied circumstances of your condition, and lead you to a more correct acquaintance with your own hearts—to a closer walking with God, and patient waiting for Christ. You know that his earnest and abiding desire was "to give heed unto himself and to his doctrine, that he might both save himself and those who heard him."

But, my brethren, if any of you should entertain doubts upon the subject, or be disposed to say that you do not know all this, then I must tell *you*, that this very house, which was reared by a lady of blessed memory, and in which so many of Zion's pilgrims have found a refreshing place to help them on in the way, shall testify against you, for *it* hath heard

the many gracious words that were spoken—the faithful messages delivered—the affectionate exhortations and fervent pleadings used—and the holy wrestlings with the Lord that He might give His blessing, "which maketh rich, and with which He addeth no sorrow." "The stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber, shall answer it," and tell that the congregation worshipping in this place during the long and faithful ministry of your late pastor have received a sum of gospel doctrine, and an amount of spiritual privileges, that have scarcely been surpassed, if they have been equalled in any place of worship in this city, or throughout this highly favoured land, and that a fearful condemnation shall overtake those who have enjoyed those advantages, and yet have neglected to improve them.

My dear brethren, "I hope better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, although I thus speak." When I call to remembrance the venerable and dear persons that I have seen occupying places in this church, and think of what they were in their day and generation, I cannot but indulge the confidence that they and their beloved pastor are again united in the kingdom of their Father, and become "pillars in the temple of their God to go no more out!" And when I see other aged disciples here that have grown up under his ministry, and almost "reached the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;" and younger ones "bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God;" and others still who, "as new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may

grow thereby," my heart is filled with joyful emotions in the prospect of the goodly company who shall be to him as a crown of joy and rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus."

At the close of a long life of activity and usefulness in the work of the ministry, the Lord was pleased to grant to your revered pastor a short season of repose before he was called hence. During that interval, the words of the apostle might be regarded as the distinct and daily language of his condition. "I am ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." That was his position, and he had arrived at it by the same path that was marked by the footsteps of the apostle Paul. In his own sphere of obligation and of duty, it was given unto him to shew that he was animated by the same spirit, and that he walked in the same steps. And therefore he might also say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

Who can doubt, my brethren, that he has now entered into the joy of his Lord? Oh! how sweet to the hearts of his mourning friends is the confidence, that the Master whom he loved, and honoured, and served, while here, has now taken him to himself—that he might rise from the sanctuary below to that which is above, and engage in the services of the New Jerusalem, and join in the halelujahs of the blessed. While we are permitted in this manner to indulge the mingled emotions of sorrow and of joy suited to this occasion, let us not forget to put our confidence in the Lord. "The Lord liveth, blessed

be our rock." He has shewn His regard for this portion of His vineyard, by calling to the charge of it a workman who needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth"—one who has already given proof of his ministry, and whose desire it is, "by manifestation of the truth, to commend his doctrine to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

Let me call upon you to strengthen his hands and encourage his heart by giving regular attendance on his ministry, and by "giving yourselves entirely unto the Lord." Strive together in prayer to God, that a double portion of the spirit of him who walked with God and is not, because God took him, may descend upon his successor!—and that this vineyard, which the Lord's right-hand hath planted, may continue to be as a well-watered garden, and as a field in which the Lord doth take delight—that there may ever be found in it many trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified!

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